

## **HIGH POINT HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION BY-LAWS**

### **Section I - Purpose of the Commission**

The Commission is assigned the following functions by City Ordinance:

- A. To develop and promulgate an educational program to acquaint High Point residents with all local, state and federal civil rights ordinances, statutes, and laws.
- B. To recommend to the City Council such actions as may be necessary or advisable to achieve the following:
  - 1. Equal employment opportunity for all persons.
  - 2. Equal housing opportunities for all persons.
  - 3. Equal public accommodation opportunities for all persons.
  - 4. Best possible High Point government-community relations in all fields of governmental endeavor.
- C. To supplement the foregoing purposes by the following means:
  - 1. Formation of special committees, subcommittees, ad-hoc committees.
  - 2. To make a continuing review of ways to implement the relevant laws.
  - 3. To solicit aid from other social agencies in educating and protecting the public.
  - 4. To communicate with other similar commissions in order to share experiences and become more sensitive to potential problems.
- D. To oversee fair housing appeals coming before the fair housing committee.
- E. To convene fair housing hearings.
- F. To perform such functions as are committed to it by other ordinances or resolutions.

### **Section II - Membership and Attendance**

#### **A. Membership**

- 1. New member applications shall be reviewed by the Commission.
- 2. After review of applications and assessment of open seats on the Commission, the Commissioners will make recommendations to City Council as to which new applicants best fit the needs of the Commission.
- 3. Members of the commission are appointed by City Council.

#### **B. Attendance.**

Members are expected to attend regular meetings as required. After review, the executive committee may recommend to city council whether a member should be retained or removed from the commission. The recommendation will be determined by the following:

- 1. Three consecutive absences from regularly scheduled meetings if notification of any such absence has not been submitted to the chairperson or staff liaison prior to the meetings where the absence occurred.
- 2. Five absences from regularly scheduled meetings of the board in any calendar year if notification of any such absence has not been submitted to the chairperson or staff liaison prior to the meetings where the absence occurred.

In the event that a vacancy occurs by reasons stated in Section II, the chairperson or director of the affected commission shall immediately notify the council liaison, so that the vacancy can be filled in accordance with city ordinance by the City Council.

#### **C. Breach of Section III of the by-laws governing general conduct of commissioners.**

### **Section III - General Conduct**

Government appointees are expected to meet high standards of conduct, which enhance and maintain public confidence in the operation of the Commission. In order to instill public confidence in the actions and decisions of the Commission members will adhere to the following:

A. Be cognizant of your individual actions as a member of the Commission.

1. Commissioners are expected to act at all times with integrity demonstrating good faith, honesty, and due diligence on behalf of the public interest.
2. Commissioners are expected to participate, prepare, and regularly attend meetings in order to adequately carry out the duties expected of them.
3. The public conduct and language of commissioners must be free of discrimination, harassment, and hate acts prohibited by local, state, and federal laws. Conduct should reflect social standards of courtesy, respect, and dignity.
4. Commissioners must not reveal or divulge information deemed confidential by the Commission or director received in the course of their duties. Confidential information must not be used for any purpose outside that of undertaking the work of the Commission to which they have been appointed.
5. Commissioners must comply with the public comment protocols established by the City or Commission. If none exist, Commissioners must refer to the chair or director for guidance before making public comment on Commission matters.
6. Commissioners may not make individual personal statements, editorials, speeches, appearances, or requests for information on behalf of the Commission.
7. Commissioners' work or endeavors should not result in any financial or other substantive gain for personal increase and/or profit, or for organized entities to which the Commissioner may have membership or affiliation. (Private gain does not include honoraria for service on other agencies, boards or commissions).
8. Commissioners must inform the chair or director of any circumstance that may have a negative or harmful impact on their respective abilities to perform the duties required of their appointments or that could reflect negatively upon the Commission.

#### **Section IV. - Conflict of Interest**

Commissioners must avoid any activity that might impair or impugn the independence, integrity or impartiality of the Commission. There must be no apprehension of bias, based on what a reasonable person might perceive.

A. Commissioners who are in any doubt must disclose their circumstances and consult with the chair or director. In practical terms, Commissioners should ensure that:

1. All personal financial interests, assets and holdings are distinct from and independent of any decision, information or other matter that may be heard by or acted upon by the commission.
2. Activities undertaken as a private citizen are kept separate and distinct from any responsibilities held as a member of the Commission.
3. Activities undertaken individually as a member of other agencies, boards, or commissions are kept separate and distinct from the Commission.
4. Recusal is expected when agencies, organizations, boards, and commissions you are affiliated with come before the Commission for action.
5. Commissioners may not receive any form of payment for products, services, or acts done as a part of commission sponsored or supported events.
6. Other memberships, directorships, voluntary or paid positions or affiliations remain distinct from work undertaken in the course of performing their duties as public appointees. Actions taken in the course of performing duties as public appointees neither cause nor suggest the reality or perception that their ability to perform or exercise those duties has been or could be affected by private gain or interest.

#### **Section V – Election, Tenure, and Duties of the Chair & Vice Chair**

The commission shall elect from its membership a Chair and Vice Chair, each for a one year term and they will be eligible for re-election. Their duties shall be those generally assigned by the nature of their offices. Interim elections may be held if any such office is vacated.

#### **Section VI - Committees**

A. Standing Committees of the Commission shall be appointed by vote of the Commission after discussion by the Commission. Each Committee shall annually elect appropriate officers from among its membership if deemed necessary. Interim elections may be held if any such office is vacated. The following shall constitute the Standing Committees with responsibilities as described under each:

**Standing Committees:**

1. Executive (nominations)
2. Fair Housing
3. Education & Seminars
4. Special Programs

**Section VII - Conduct of Business**

A. Quorum - A quorum for the official conduct of business shall consist of a simple majority of voting Commission members.

B. Business shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

C. Meeting Time

1. The Commission shall hold 11 monthly meetings, July being the non-convening month, which shall be conducted on the second Thursday of each month at 5:30 p. m. at City Hall.
2. Meeting times or location can be changed by a majority vote or in case of emergency by the chair.
3. Additional meetings as needed shall be called by the Chair, Vice Chair, or any three members.
4. The Commission shall hold an annual retreat.

D. Time Commitment - members have agreed to a minimum time commitment of 3 hours per month (this is inclusive of regular Commission and committee meetings).

E. Meetings are open to the public with the Commission reserving the right to move into private session.

**Section VIII - Changes and Amendments**

The by-laws may be changed and/or amended by motion passed by three-fourths of the entire commission, which includes voting members and City Liaisons, provided written notice of the proposed amendment(s) is mailed to all Commission members at least 10 days prior to the meeting which action proposed is to be taken.

Adopted by the High Point Human Relations Commission this 1 day of April, 2009.

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Chair - Angela G. McGill

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Director - Alvena C. Heggins